

Permeable Cultural Systems: Recasting Industrial Grounds as Immigrant Community Space



Tulou, Fujian, China



Chinatown, New York



Sunset Park, New York



Exterior Facade



Palmas Del Caribe Casita, The Bronx, 1970s -

Our project studies how immigrant communities in Sunset Park build strong social networks that help them resist gentrification. We identify the culture core as a key space where shared values, cultural practices, and essential services come together. By tracing immigrant histories—from Fujian tulou to Manhattan's Chinatown, and from earlier Scandinavian and Latin American communities in Sunset Park to today's Chinese population—we found three defining traits of a successful culture core.

First, it creates an internal world that offers safety and belonging while still connecting the community to the city. Second, it is multifunctional, combining religion, commerce, social life, and cultural expression. At the center is the kinship space, where trust and mutual support are formed. Third, culture cores are adaptable, able to serve new immigrant groups across generations.

We apply these ideas to the western Bush Terminal warehouses, redesigning them into a multi-level culture core with housing clusters, shared courtyards, backyards, and a large "culture floor" for classes, meetings, and the kinship space. The open ground floor hosts workshops and small businesses, tying cultural life to economic opportunity. Environmental strategies—ventilating courtyards, sustainable wood construction, and glass-brick façades—support comfort and daylight. A landscaped cultural buffer links the site back to the neighborhood, marking the identity of the immigrant community while remaining open and welcoming.



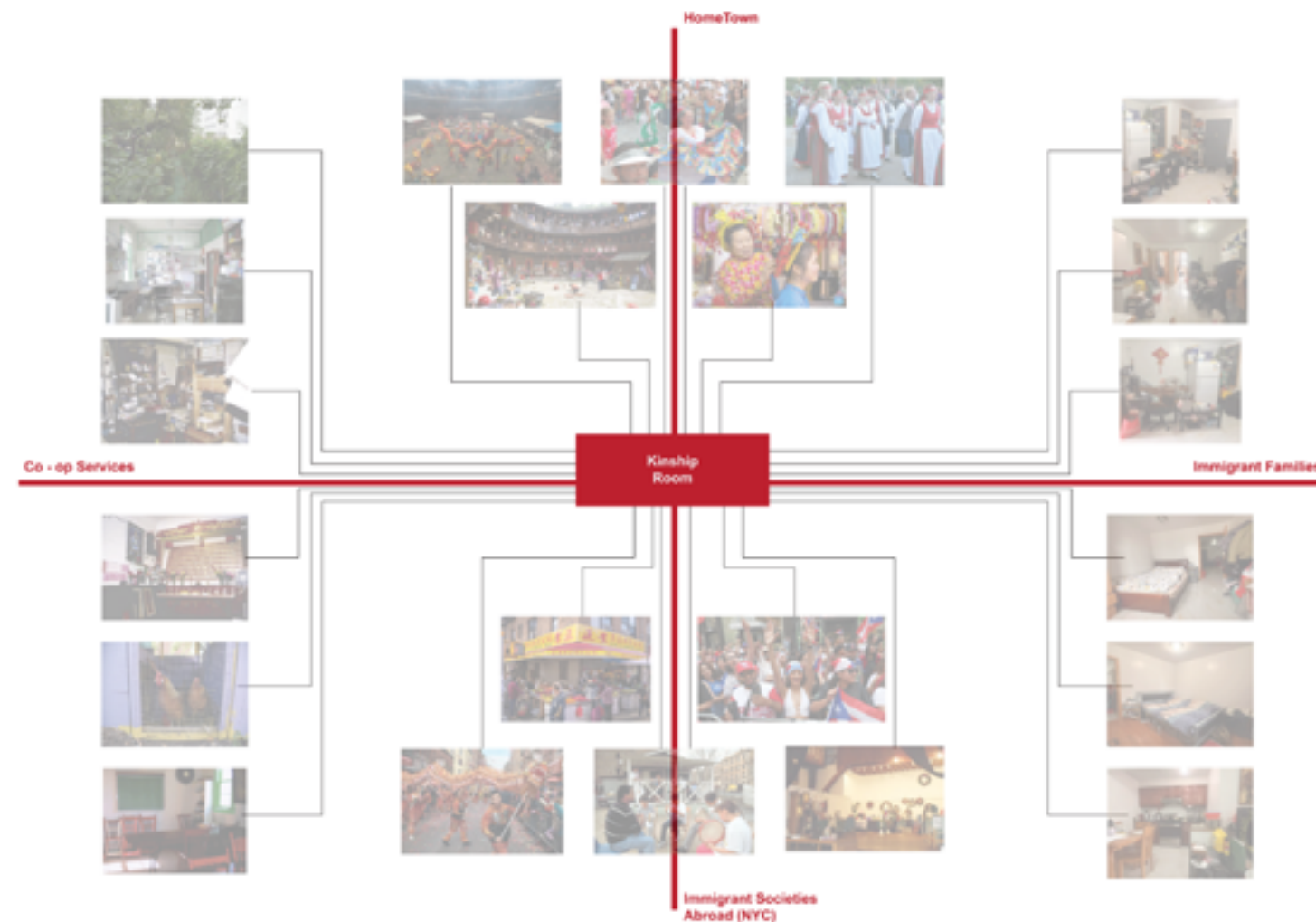
Activities to the Internal Community



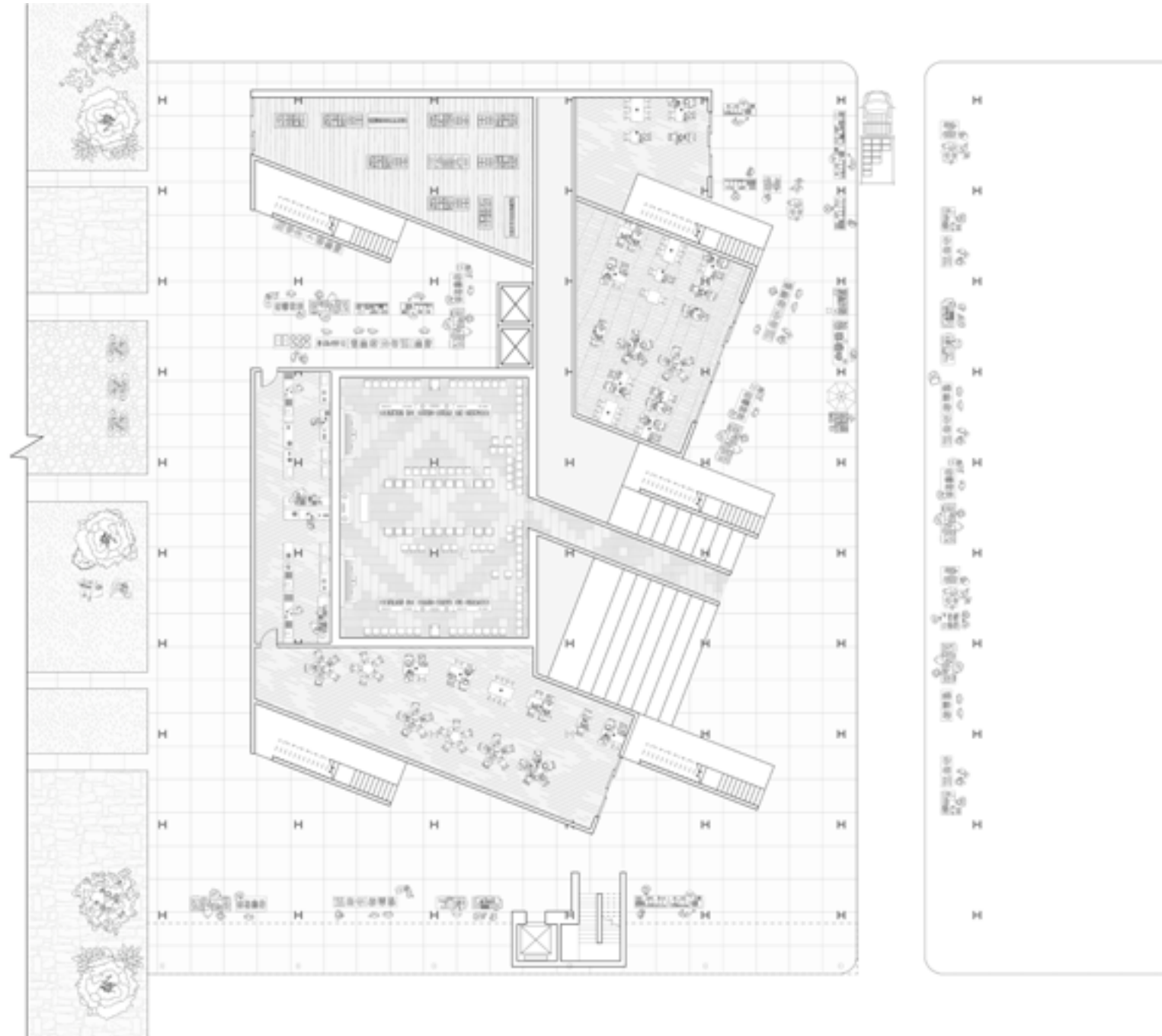
Activities to the Outside World



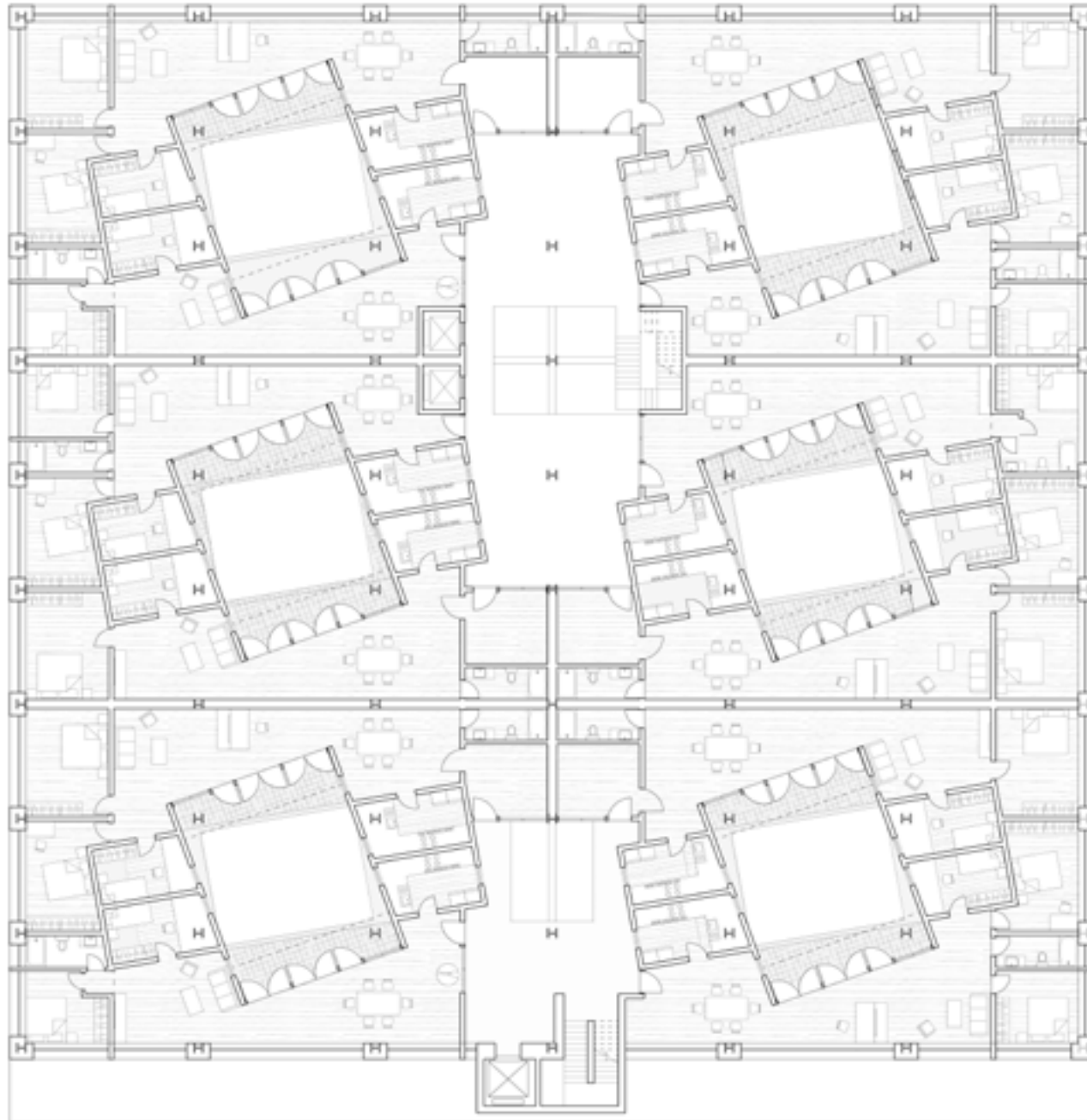
Kinship Room



PLAN AND RENDERING

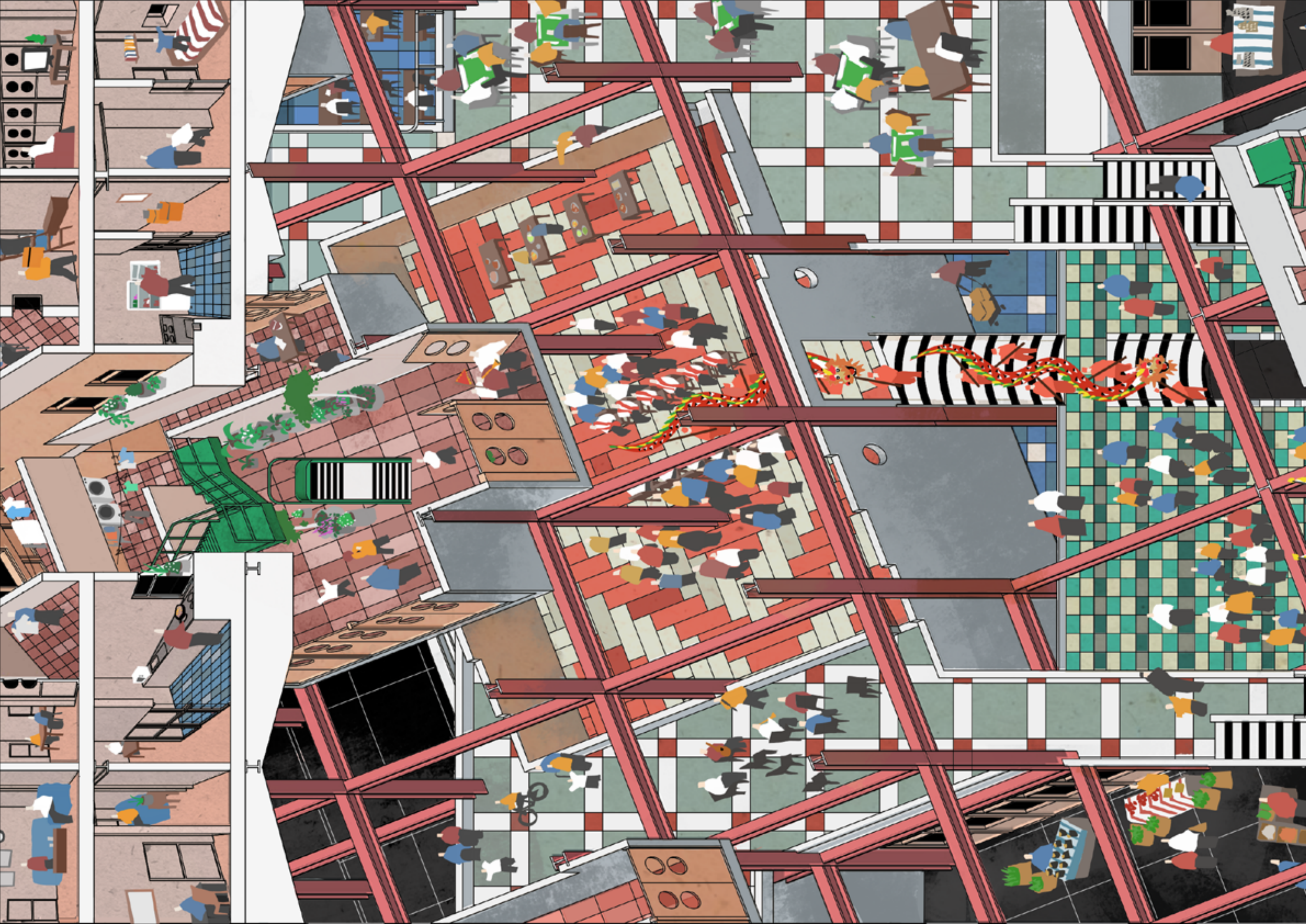


PLAN AND RENDERING

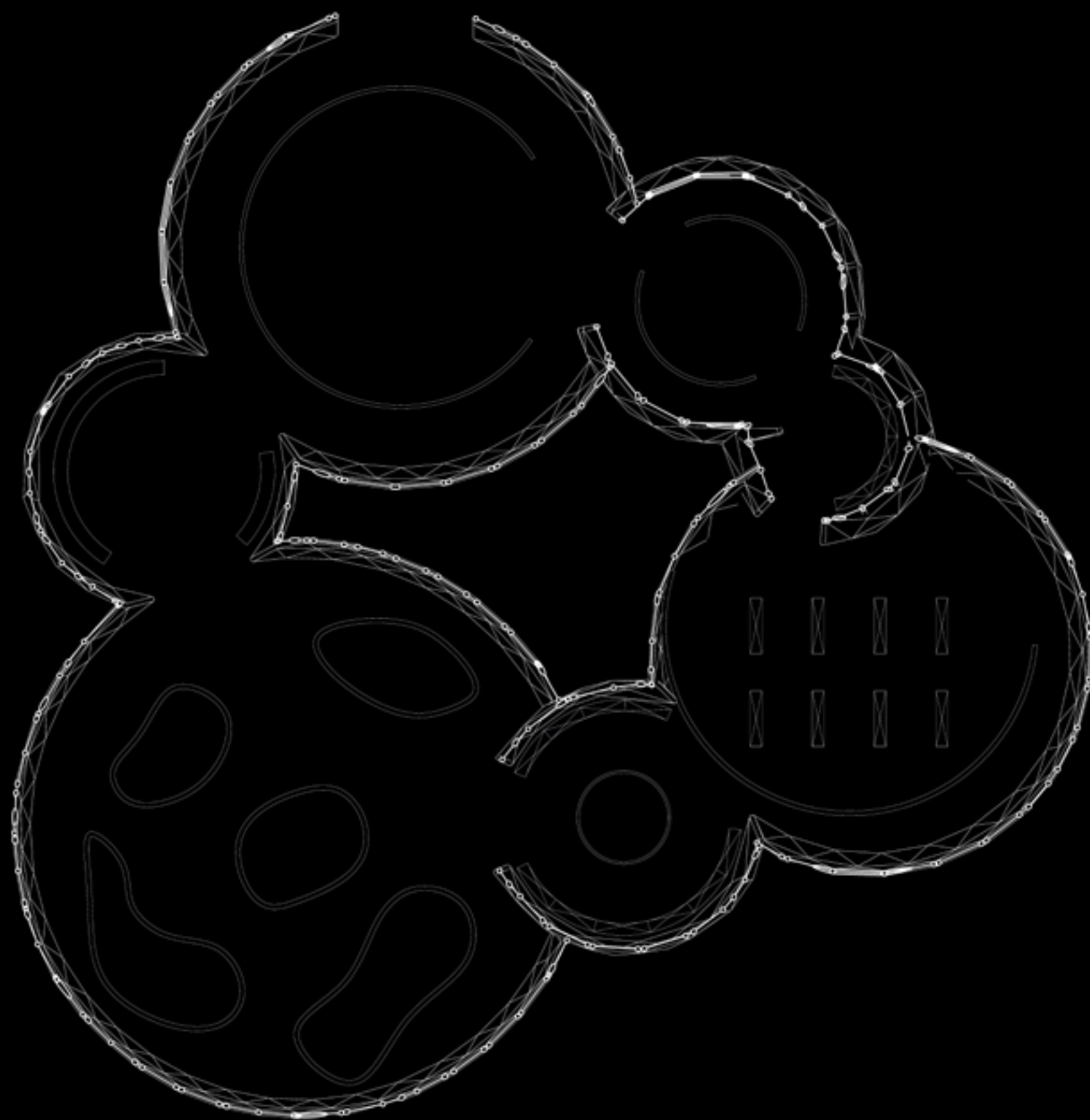


COMPOSIT DRAWING





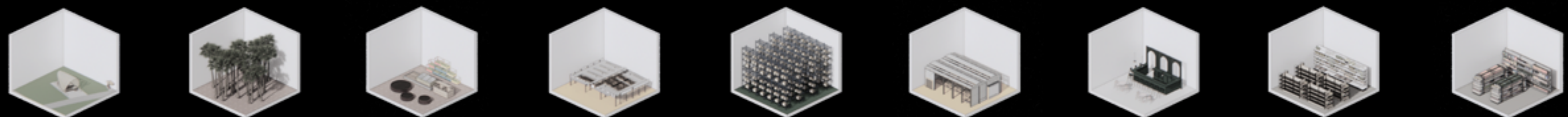
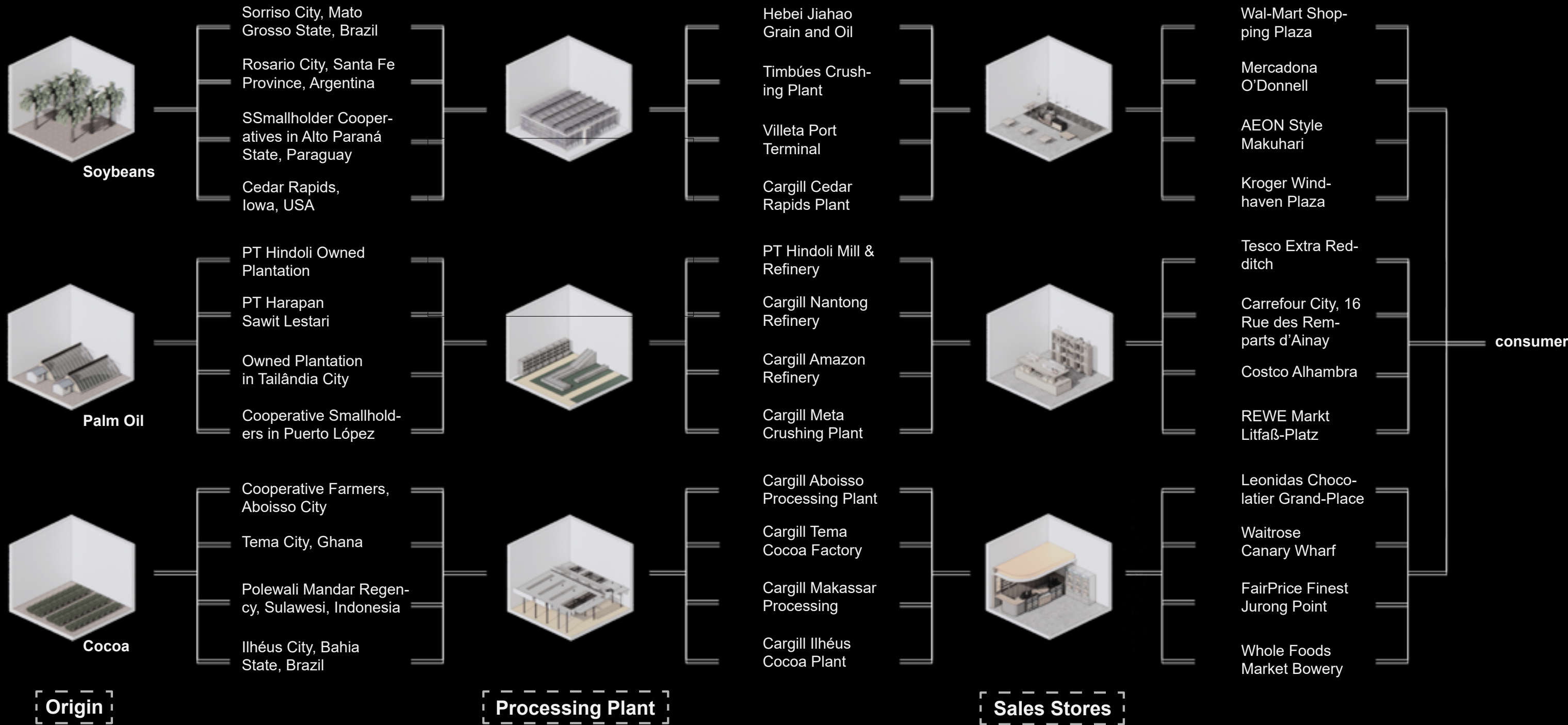


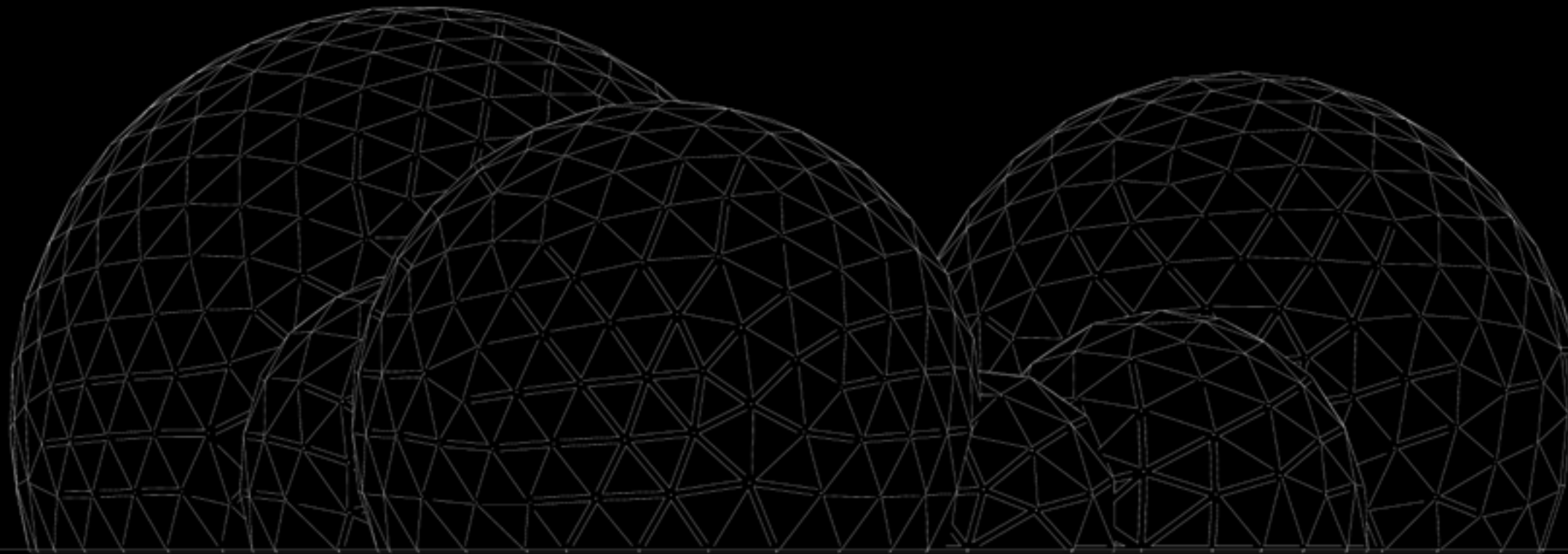


floor plan 1:100



· Industrial chain ·





ELEVATION 1:100

COFFEE GROWING

- 1 Seeding
- 2 Plant Development
- 3 Flowering
- 4 Cherry Development & Ripening

COFFEE PROCESSING

- 1 Harvesting
- 2 Sorting and Drying
- 3 Skin Shelling and Shaking
- 4 Grinding

BAMBOO PROCESSING

- 1 Puncturing Bamboo and Preservation Treatment
- 2 Sun Bleaching
- 3 Washing Bamboo
- 4 Cutting Bamboo
- 5 Storage

- 6 Extracting
- 7 Bamboo Slats

BAMBOO GROWING

- 1 Cuts
- 2 Shoots
- 3 Clumps
- 4 Harvest and Regrow

Mutual Influence

- 1 Flooding System of Bamboo helps Providing stable and Condition for the Coffee Tree growing
- 2 The well treated Bamboos can be used for build shelter for the coffee bean storage
- 3 The coffee ground helps providing textured and soil condition which would be suitable for bamboo to grow, it also attracts earthworms which loose the soil and beneficial for the bamboo grow
- 4 Incorporating coffee ground into soil building that significantly enhances their hygrothermal problem including increased heat storage capacity, improves thermal insulation, and greater compressive strength

BAMBOO SUNLIGHT FILTER

Quindío, Colombia, sits within the Andean Coffee Cultural Landscape, where steep volcanic slopes, humid mountain air, regular rainfall, and mild temperatures create one of the country's most productive coffee environments. Its valleys, bamboo forests, cloud cover, and highland ecosystems make coffee cultivation part of a larger living landscape rather than a purely agricultural field. However, the expansion of sun-grown coffee has begun to simplify this ecology: removing shade trees exposes soil to erosion, reduces biodiversity corridors, increases heat and water stress, and makes coffee farms more dependent on chemical and technical inputs.

This problem reflects a broader Anthropocene condition in which productive landscapes can become "haunted" by the ecological relationships they have created, a concern also discussed in *Acts of Living on a Damaged Planet*.

In response, Colombian coffee institutions such as Cenicafé and the National Federation of Coffee Growers promote agroforestry and shade-grown coffee systems, where trees are combined with coffee to conserve soil and water, regulate microclimate, support biodiversity, and maintain long-term production. Cenicafé specifically frames Colombia's coffee agroforestry as a system that associates tree species with coffee for soil and water conservation and sustainable family farming, while FNC reports large-scale tree planting in forest and agroforestry systems as a way to capture carbon and conserve biodiversity. Therefore, shade-grown coffee is not only an agricultural technique but also a landscape strategy: it reconnects coffee production with the forest-like conditions that originally made Quindío's coffee territory fertile, resilient, and ecologically rich.



QUINDÍO AT A GLANCE

AREA	1,845 km²
POPULATION	~600,000
APO. ALTITUDE	1,200 – 2,000 m
ANNUAL PRECIPITATION	1,200 – 3,000 mm
TEMPERATURE	18 – 24 °C
MAIN ECONOMY	Coffee, Tourism, Agriculture

LEGEND

- Department Boundary
- - - Municipal Boundary
- Main Road
- Secondary Road
- ~ River / Stream
- Urban Area
- Coffee Cultivation
- Guadua & Bamboo Areas
- Forest Cover

LANDSCAPE COMPONENTS



TOPOGRAPHY

Steep hidden vias and valleys



COFFEE LANDSCAPE

Patchwork of forms and shade systems



GUADUA RESOURCE

Native bamboo in marks and riparian



HYDROLOGY

Dares river network and outbexdes



ECOLOGICAL CORRIDOR

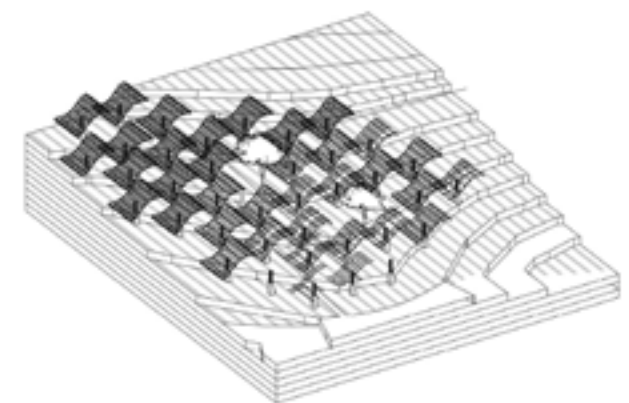
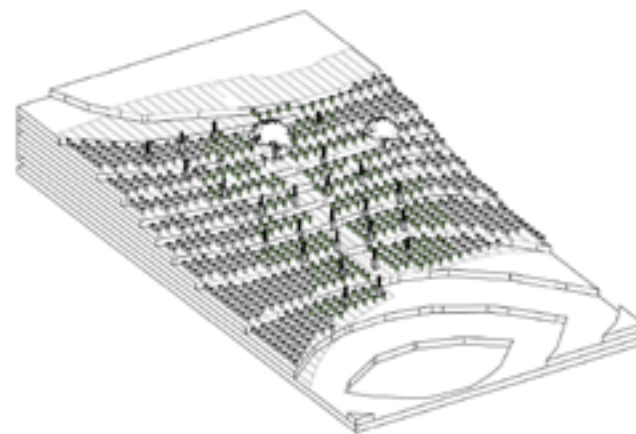
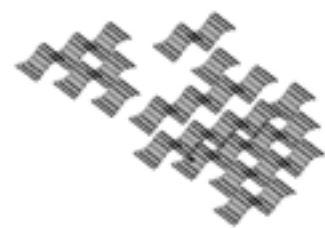
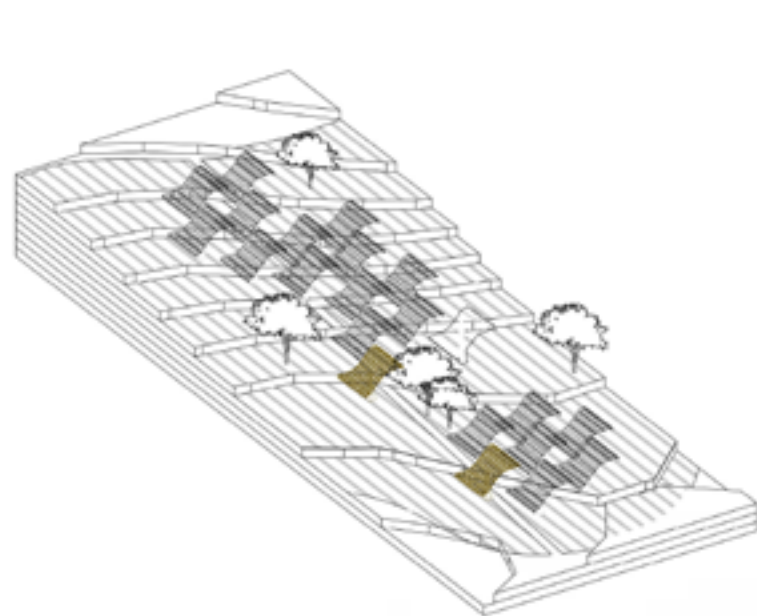
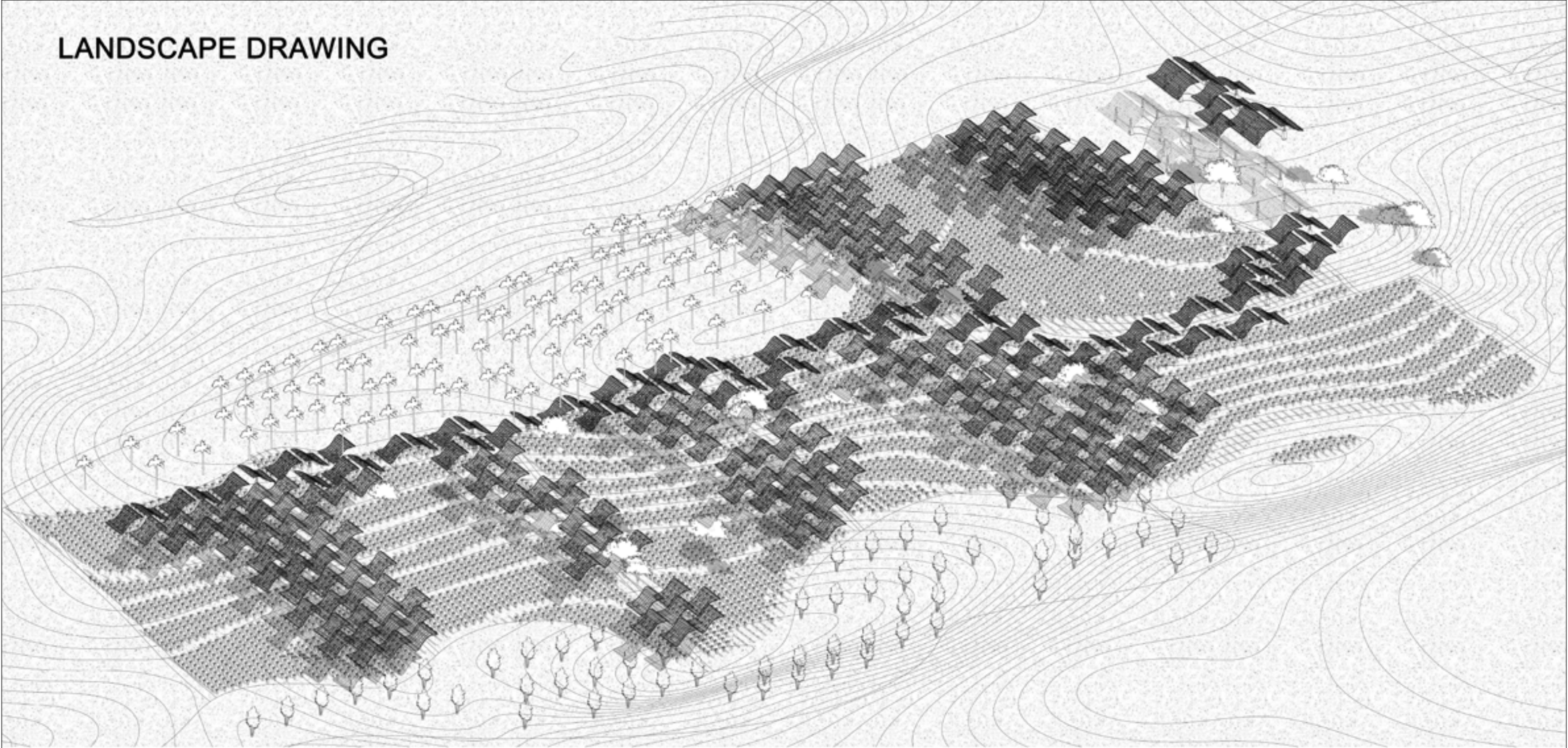
Connecting forests along waterways

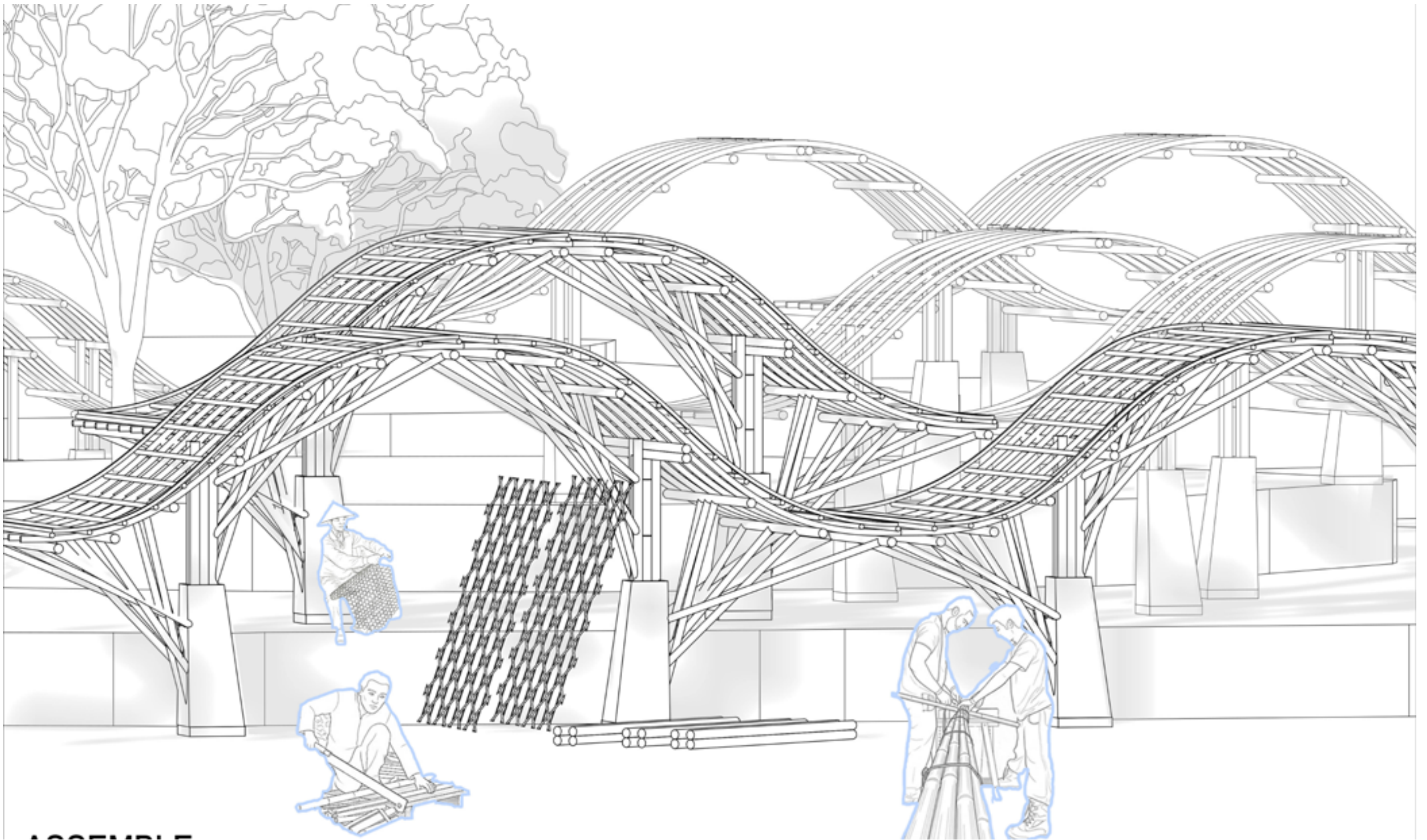


HUMAN NETWORK

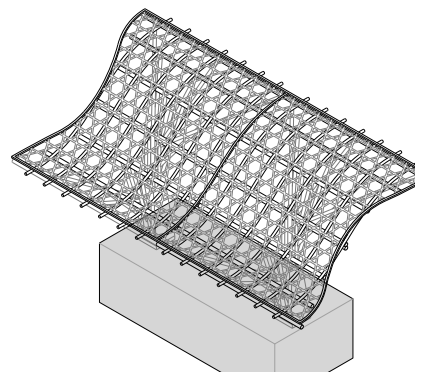
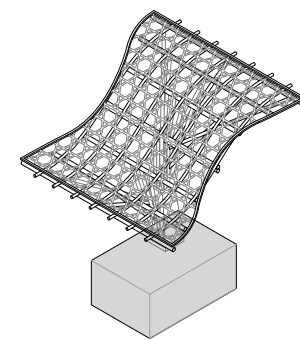
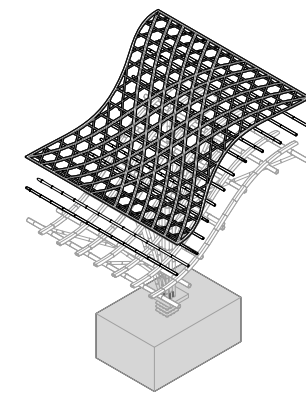
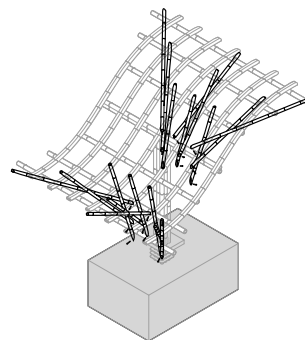
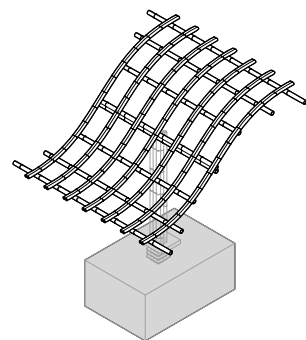
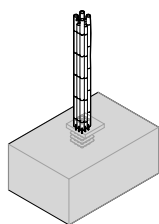
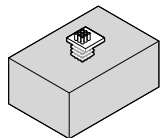
Forms, roads and settlements structure

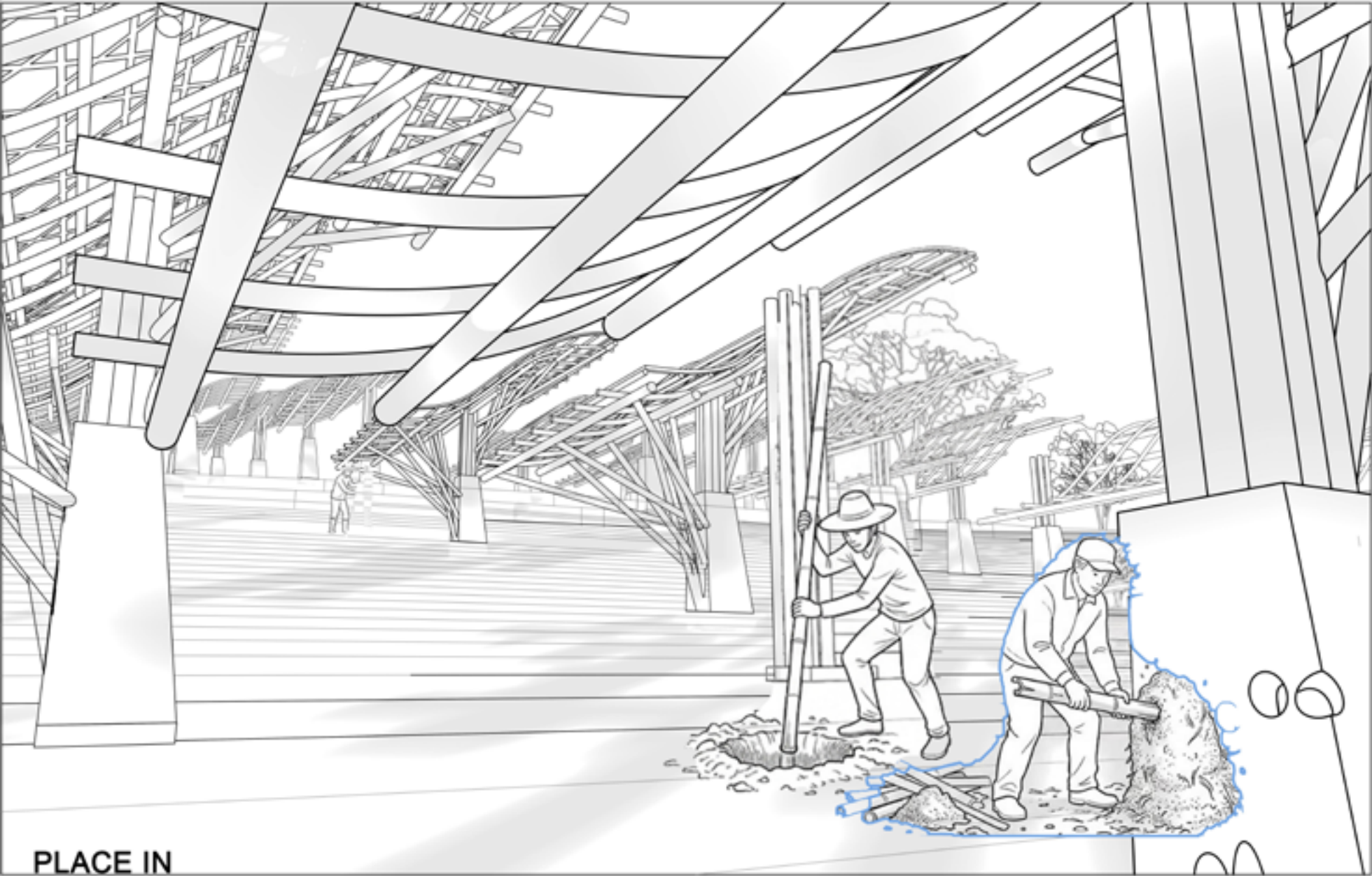
LANDSCAPE DRAWING



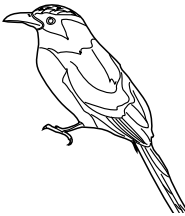
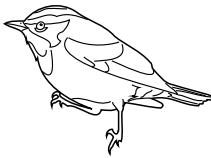
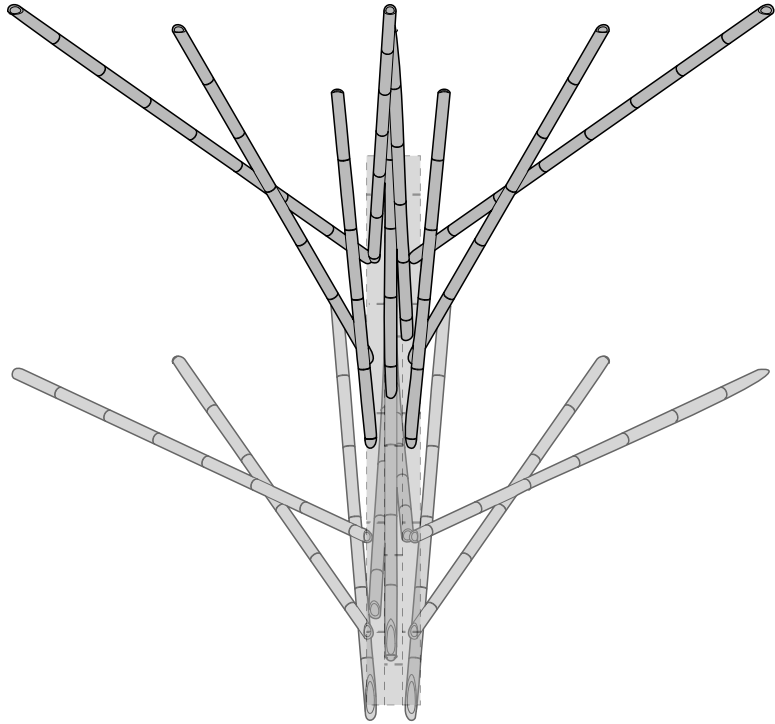
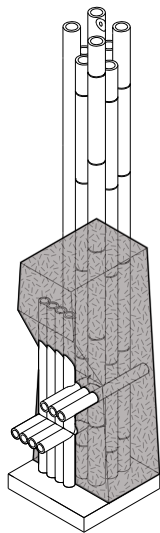
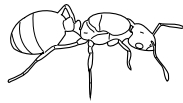
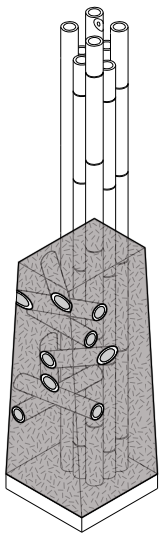
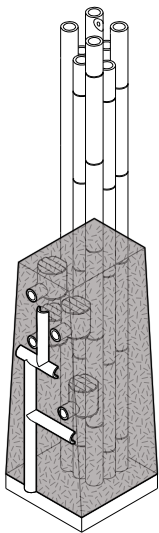
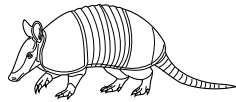
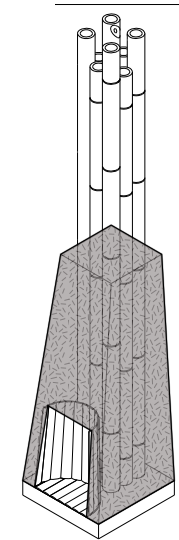


By using simple bamboo assembled structures, the coffee workers are able to settle and repair them on the field anytime they need, the structure is also able to be changed into different forms in order to form more free arranged spaces based on the actual requirements of the workers.





PLACE IN



Clay



Coffee Ground



Bamboo Fiber

